

Story Hour – Clean Boats, Clean Water

(Items in red indicate supplies you will need.)

Objective: to train children to remind their parents to clean their boats before launching and after taking them out the water.

1. Welcome children; attach

nametags; introduce self;

A. Have **2 sign in sheets** for the adults. One gives their permission to have their child's photo and first name in the book that will be in their library. OPTIONAL: The second is a list of full names of all adults and children present for the program. This validates educational contact hours used for grants given to local lakes committees.

B. To the children: They will learn something today that their parents did not have to know when they were children. They have a BIG job to tell the adults in their life about taking care of our lakes.

2. Tell them we will read a book called, **Up North at the Cabin** by Marsha Wilson Chall.

A. Ask how many of them go to a lake or river. Mention that not all of us have a cabin but most of us use the lakes and rivers often.

- B. Active listening: as they listen, they are to put up a thumb when they think of something they like to do at or in a lake/river.
- C. Jot on a **chart or piece of paper** (eg. Swim, fish, tube, throw rocks, play on the beach etc. – take 6-8 answers)

3. What do we need to do to keep our lakes safe so we can do all of these fun things?

A. **Have a bag with props (empty pop can, empty bait box, candy wrappers, toy boat with weeds on it, clean boat checklist, old oil container.)** If children cannot answer the question, pull these out and discuss each one, stressing that children can really help keep lakes clean by reminding their families not to put the above in the lake.

B. **chart these ideas on paper also**

C. Main points to stress:

1. **Clean weeds off your boat, trailer and fishing equipment.** No boats with weeds on them go into a lake because that can spread the bad plants that ruin a lake (make it difficult to boat and swim, smother the other plants, and kill what is supposed to grow there). *If possible, show picture of a lake covered in invasive plants.

2. **Drain all water for your boat and equipment including containers with fish and livewells.** Water from one lake can carry with it invasives from another lake. Some of which may be so small you can't even see them (seeds, eggs, etc.)

3. **Throw unwanted bait in the trash and not the lake.** Show bait box/bucket. Ask what we do with bait

that is left when we are done fishing. Stress it goes into the trash, not into the lake. Also the water must be drained before leaving the lake. Bait or the water it is in can transport invasive species to another lake.

4. Tell them we will go out and see a boat that is NOT ready to go into our lakes. (need a real boat with fake weeds attached.)

I use our canoe with a mounted motor on a trailer. I pick grasses/weeds from our drive way, put them in a large garage bag with water overnight. They are nice and slimey to layer on the boat and trailer once we are on site for the program. I remove them to the bag before traveling home and put the grasses in our mulch pile.

- A. Give each child a **post-it-note**.
- B. Ground rules: we will walk out to the boat; every time we see something on the boat that should not go into another lake, we will place our paper there; children are NOT to pull off what they see, just place their paper. Have children tell where their paper is and why it's there. Use the Clean Boat inspection sheet to see all of the places to look. Imitate pulling off weeds and hosing down the boat. **Give them additional post-it-notes as requested once we are outside.**
- C. **Take a group picture in front of the boat. (need a camera)**

5. OPTIONAL: Make visors (need foam visors, Clean Boats, Clean Water stickers, foam decorations, permanent markers)

A. Have children gather around for directions (extra helpers will be needed here). Have a model visor on.

B. Directions:

1. Choose the color visor you want. (I usually put the Clean Boat, Clean Water sticker on it prior to the program.)
2. They may choose foam creatures to stick on their visor, just not on the sticker. Help them get the paper off the back.
 - a. I have easy creatures for the young ones and more detailed for the older ones (holes need to be punched out for eyes etc.) Put these in different places and divide the group by age: preschool – 1st grade; 2nd grade and up
3. Helpers can use **permanent markers** to put the children's' names on it; I also have letters for the older kids and they can put their INITIALS (not full name – it will take too long) on theirs

6. Regroup and teach them the Clean Boats song – repeat at least 2 times. It is to the tune of “If You’re Happy and You Know It.” No accompaniment is necessary although I have an autoharp that I sometimes use. Song lyrics can be found on the web site.

7. Book production: (need paper – I prefer cardstock – pencils, colored pencils for coloring in; permanent markers to write the sentence)

A. They can draw pictures from the list they made at the beginning (what they like to do in lakes and how to keep our lakes clean. I assign these so everyone who wants to color can do so.) These can be kept to make a book for the library.* Children may add their first name. Older children or adults add the appropriate sentence describing their picture.

*The book can be called We Love Our Lakes. (See We Love Our Lakes Book Template link on web site). Put a simple sentence at the bottom of each page describing what they like to do at the lake/river such as “We love to swim.” Allow 6 pages or so. For large groups, you can use half sheets of paper so the book isn’t so large and expensive to bind. Then write on a new page, **How we can keep our lakes clean**. The next 6 pages can have simple sentences also: “Put the bait in the trash. Don’t throw litter in the lake. Pull weeds off of boats. Drain all water from boat and equipment before leaving lake.”, etc. On the last page put the group picture. Do not put names of the children on it. Instead say that the authors and illustrators are: The Children from the _____ (name of library or class) Library Story Hour. Laminate, bind, and put it into the permanent collection. (We use our educational dollars from our grant for this, the most expensive part of the program. Supplies also come from the grant.)

Little children may want to take their picture home. They can draw a second or just give them a piece of paper to take home.

B. You can sing the song again.

This can be an evaluation of your session.

8. Closing

A. Review key steps to stop the spread of invasives with kids and tell them to share the information with parents.

B. Hand out bags: (ziploc bags have boat inspection sheet, song sheet, trailer sticker, bait bucket stickers, invasive species wildcards, zebra mussel tattoos, and another Clean Boats, Clean Water sticker on the outside)

1. Go through the bag and show them what is in there and how to use it.

- They can share the words to the song so their family can learn it too.

-The boat inspection sheet shows the adults where to clean the boat.

-The sticker is a gift to an adult to put on the trailer of their boat (ask them to identify what sign this is (stop sign) and tell them it is a reminder to stop and clean the boat before it goes into a lake AND after it comes out. Same for the bait bucket sticker.

-The little cards show the animals and plants we do not want in our lakes.

C.Reinforce with them that children can do something to save our lakes. We can remind the adults we know to clean their boats.

Throughout the presentation it is important to accept all answers positively. Continue to praise all efforts and tell them how smart they are. Thank them for coming and for being such good participants.